THE EXISTENCE OF GOD

by Thos.Cary Johnson

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THE EXISTENCE OF GOD

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1. God is the infinite and perfect Spirit, the cause, the support, and the end of all things.

2. How do we know that God exists?

(1) We have a rational intuition of the necessity of the existence of the Absolute, the Unconditioned. By the "Absolute" we mean that which is complete in itself, that which stands in no necessary relation to anything else. It denotes being which is independent as to its existence and action. The Unconditioned is the unrestricted. It is used here as practically synonymous with the Absolute.

(2) By several lines of evidence we verify the reality of the Absolute, the Unconditioned, vivify our notion of it, and learn somewhat of its character. These lines of evidence are the ontological, the cosmological, the teleological, and the anthropological.

(3) By considering Revelation we should have another and a most convincing evidence of the existence of God. But that great line of evidence for God's existence and the portrayal of His character we must defer the consideration of, until we have advanced to the study of Revealed Theology.

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CHAPTER I.

OUR RATIONAL INTUITION OF THE NECESSITY OF THE EXISTENCE OF THE ABSOLUTE, THE UNCONDITIONED

§I. Rational Intuitions in General.

1st. *Their nature.*

1. Negatively.—A rational intuition is not: (1) "A truth written prior to consciousness on the substance of the soul."

(2) "Actual knowledge which the soul finds itself in possession of at birth."

(3) "An idea undeveloped at birth but which has the power of development apart from observation and experience."

2. Positively.—A rational intuition is a truth, which, though perceived on occasion of experience, is not derived from observation. It is a truth which has such logical priority that it must be assumed in order to every observation possible; and the mind not only has the native capacity to see it once the proper occasions have been presented, but the recognition of it is inevitable as soon as the mind begins to give an account to itself of its own knowledge.

2d. *Their criteria.* The criteria by which rational intuitions are to be tested are three:

1. Their logical priority and independence.—They are not derived from, or inferred from any other truth.

2. Their necessity.—Men do indeed deny them but they are driven by the very necessity of their nature to act on them and recognize them upon the occurrence of the proper conditions.

3. Their universality.—They are as much true in every relevant case as in the first. All men manifest a practical belief in them.

§II. The Existence of the Absolute, the Unconditioned, is a Rational Intuition.

1. *The knowledge of the necessity of existence* of the Absolute, the Unconditioned, stands the test of the first criterion of a rational intuition—logical priority and independence. We have an immediate intuition of the necessity of the existence of the Absolute, that is of being which is dependent on no other as the condition of its existence and activity. We see that it is implied in the existence of the dependent world of finite things.

2. The knowledge of the necessity of the existence of the Absolute, the Unconditioned, stands the test of the second criterion of rational intuitions—that of necessity.

(1) Men not only act upon the view of its necessity, they must act upon it. Except upon the recognition of this truth no part of life can be construed.

(2) He who would deny the existence of the Absolute must assume that very existence in his argument by employing logical processes which can have no validity if the Absolute exist not.

3. The knowledge of the necessity of the existence of the Absolute stands the test of the third criterion of rational intuitions—that of universality.

(1) It is a fact that men almost universally have acknowledged the existence of the Unconditioned, the Absolute, on whom they have conceived themselves dependent.

(a) See Paul's teaching, Rom. 1:19, 20; Acts 17:24-28; 14:16; Rom. 2:4. Notice his use of apokalupto and phaneroō.

(b) Turretin's view of speculative atheism.

(c) Calvin's view of the human mind as naturally endowed with the knowledge of God.

(d) Pearson on the attitude of the world toward the existence of God.

(e) Socrates' teachings of a natural belief in God. Republic II, 378.

(f) Cudworth's teaching as to the views of Pagan philosophers.

(g) Cicero, De Legibus I, 8: "There is no tribe that does not know at least that it ought to have a god."

(h) Tertullian, Apologeticus, 17. "God proves himself to be God and the only God by the fact that He is known to all nations. The consciousness of God is the original dowry of the soul."

(i) Kant, Pure Reason, p. 363, "Among all nations, through the darkest polytheism, glimmer some faint sparks of monotheism," etc.

(j) Herbert Spencer, "The axiomatic truths of physical science unavoidably postulate Absolute Being as their common basis."

These testimonies establish the fact of the universality of the knowledge of the Absolute. No faculty of the human soul works perfectly. The faculty of rational intuition seems to have given to one man a clearer idea of the Absolute than to another; but the facts seem to show that all have it.

(2) Those peoples which have at first seemed destitute of such knowledge, have upon further investigation, been found to have it.

E. g., the Makondi of whom Livingstone writes, Last Journals, p. 38. Compare Quatrefages, Human Species XXXV.

(3) Those people who profess themselves to be without any knowledge of the Unconditioned do nevertheless manifest the existence of such an idea in their minds. E. g., Voltaire, Shelley.

(4) The universality of the notion of the Unconditioned can be most satisfactorily explained by supposing that it has its ground in the nature of man's mental constitution.

§III. The Contents of This Intuition.

1. The idea is positive though we cannot completely grasp it.

2. It is not a mere subjective idea as Kant in his "Pure Reason" teaches.

3. The Absolute is not the sum total of the finite.

4. The Absolute is not the largest general notion, or general concept. Thought and being are not identical.

5. The Absolute is not "pure being," "the thing in itself," out of all relations.

6. The Absolute, the necessity of whose existence is known by intuition, is self-existent, necessary, independent, the ground of the dependent.

7. More concerning the Absolute we do not affirm at this stage. So far as we have gone it would appear that the Absolute may be the universal substance of Spinoza, or the unknowable of Spencer, or the God of the Theist. By lines of evidence, subsequently to be considered, we shall exclude the suppositions of Spinoza and Spencer.

In the usual arguments for the existence of God which are to follow, we shall verify the truth of the intuition of the Unconditioned and develop the idea. We shall thus reach the idea that the Absolute being is a person, infinite in reason as in power.

In the next lecture we shall state the ontological and cosmological arguments for the existence of God.

CHAPTER II.

CORROBORATIVE EVIDENCE OF GOD'S EXISTENCE

§IV. The A Priori Argument for God's Existence.

This argument infers the existence of God from the abstract and necessary ideas of the human reason. It is not to be confounded with the intuition of the Absolute which is called forth on our perception of dependent existence. The *a priori* proceeds from necessary ideas. It has several forms:

1. That of Samuel Clarke (1705), in his "Demonstration of the Being and Attributes of God": Space and time are infinite and necessarily existent. They are not substances. They must be attributes and there must be a substance of which they are the attributes.

Gillespie put this argument somewhat differently. Space and time are modes of existence. They are respectively infinite and eternal. There must be therefore an infinite eternal being who subsists in these modes.

We reply: Space and time are neither attributes of substance, nor modes of existence, but necessary conditions—time being a necessary condition of the persistence of things or succession of events, and space being a necessary condition to the situation of bodies, or to their movement.

2. That of Des Cartes (1596-1650), published in his *"Meditations de prima philosophia"*: "The idea of an infinitely perfect being which we possess could not have originated in a finite source, and must therefore have been communicated to us by an infinitely perfect being." He also claims in other connections that this idea represents an objective reality because: (1) it is pre-eminently clear; and (2) it is necessary.

We reply: (1) This form of the argument is *a priori* only in the sense that it is based on the necessary idea of the human mind. It is *a posteriori* in arguing from effect to cause—from a fact of experience back to an adequate cause of that fact. Granting that no finite causes could produce the idea of an infinitely perfect being the argument would have weight. It is difficult to make evident the concession, however. (2) As for Des Cartes's secondary argument—from the clearness of the notion of a most perfect being: it does not appear to have any force. I may have a clear idea of a centaur and there be no centaur.

3. That of Anselm (1033-1109), in his *Monologium and Proslogium:* "We have the idea of an absolutely perfect being, but real existence is a necessary element of infinite and absolute perfection. Therefore an infinitely perfect being exists. Otherwise the infinitely perfect as we conceive it would lack an essential element of perfection.

We reply: This argument confounds ideal existence with real existence. But there is a difference. Existence in reality is no quality of a concept. From mere ideal or notional existence, existence, real existence (substantial existence) cannot be inferred.

The value of this argument is to show how the most perfect being must be thought, if there be such a being.

4. The *logical form of the a priori* proof (found in Aquinas and Anselm): "It is impossible to deny that there is truth . . . . But those ideas and truths which are the ground work of all our knowledge —the laws of our intellectual and moral constitution—have their source without us and beyond. They inhere in God.

5. Trendelenberg's proof: "The human mind goes out of itself to know the world, and also by exertions of the will, to mould and subdue it. Yet the world is independent of the mind that seeks thus to comprehend it, or shape it to its purposes. This freedom of the mind implies that the world is intelligible, that there is thought in the world. It implies that there is a common bond—namely, God, between thought and things—an intelligible ground of both.

There would seem then to be a common ground of truth and things in which the eternal truths inhere. This ground would seem to be infinite and eternal; and hence to be identified with the Absolute, the Unconditioned, known by intuition; else we would have two infinite and absolute conditions.

§V. The Cosmological Argument.

This is an argument from begun existence, or change in anything previously existing, to a sufficient cause of that beginning, or of that change. It might be stated in the form of a syllogism as follows:

Major Premise: Every begun thing, or change in anything, owes its existence, or change, to some producing cause, pre-existing and adequate.

Minor Premise: The universe so far as its present form is concerned, and probably as to the very matter of it, is a begun thing.

Conclusion: Hence the universe, so far as its present form is concerned, and probably as to its very matter, has a pre-existing and adequate cause; and its ultimate, or absolute cause must be uncaused and unchangeable.

1st. As to the *major premise:* The causal judgment is intuitive, absolutely universal, necessary. It has been denied theoretically by some

philosophers, as Hume and Mill, but it is always used by them and all others in all their reasoning as to the origin of the world as well as to the things it contains. The judgment is unavoidable. Something exists now. Therefore something has always existed; and that which existed always (from eternity) is the cause of that which exists only now.

Objection: It has been objected that the casual judgment leads to an infinite regressive series of causes and effects.

It is replied: This is not the case: 1. The judgment is not that *everything* must have a cause, but that every begun thing, or change must have a cause. That which is eternal and immutable needs no cause. 2. An infinite series of causes and effects is absurd, for that is only a series of changes which demands a cause to account for it. A real cause, in which the causal judgment can rest, must be something uncaused, eternal and immutable.

As a matter of fact, all philosophers assume the principles asserted. They all postulate an eternal and unchangeable cause of the universe—whether a personal spirit, or material atoms, or a substance of which both matter and spirit are modes, or an unconscious intelligent world soul in union with matter.

2d. As to the *minor premise:* The fact that the universe, or ordered world, as a whole and in all its parts, is a begun existence, is emphasized by every principle and every lesson of modern science.

There is no denying that the universe is to a great extent an effect; but the scientific proof of the non-eternity of matter is not complete. Hence such men as J. S. Mill would refer the changes through which the universe has passed to an underlying eternal source in nature, and not to an outside cause.

Thus Mr. Mill says: "There is in nature a permanent element and also a changeable; the changes are always the effects of previous changes; the permanent existences are, so far as we know, not effects at all." For example, he teaches that, of water, the substance or substances of which it consists and their inherent properties are permanent elements so far as known; that within the range of human knowledge they had no beginning and consequently, no cause; that whenever a physical phenomenon is traced to its cause, that cause is found to be "a certain quantum of force combined with certain collocations"; that "the force itself is essentially one and the same" and that there exists in nature a fixed quantity of it; that here we find in nature a permanent element, to which, if to anything, we must assign the character of first cause. ("Three Essays on Religion," 142-145.)

Reply has been made to this as follows:

1. "That mere experience does not take us to anything which we are entitled to call even apparently immutable. It only takes us, even when extended to the utmost by scientific instruments and pro-

cesses, to elements which we call simple because we have hitherto failed to analyze them into simpler elements." The so-called simple elements may be modifications of a single element, or combinations of smaller particles of the same elements. No man has seen, heard, or tasted an ultimate atom of any kind of matter. "The atomic theory in chemistry demands a faith which transcends experience, not less than the theistic theory in religion." (Flint; Theism, 105, 106).

2. "Then, secondly, though we grant that there is a permanent element in the physical universe, something in matter which is self-existent and eternal, we still need, in order to account for the universe which we know, an eternal intelligence. The universe cannot be explained as materialists think, merely physically. Grant that the atoms of matters are eternal and immutable, how could they form ths wonderful universe, characterized by such marvelous unity and variety? Did the millions of atoms take counsel together and devise a common plan and work it out? Absurd as such a hypothesis is, it is much less absurd than the supposition that these atoms combined by mere chance to produce this universe. The supposition of the existence of these atoms does not free us from the necessity of believing in a single intelligent cause, a supreme mind, to construct of them the universe. There at once, therefore, rises the question, Is it really necessary to believe both matter and mind to be eternal? No; must be the answer. The law of parsimony of causes forbids the belief unless we can show that one cause is insufficient to explain the universe. Theism is a million times easier to believe than atomistic materialism.

3. "Then, in the third place, any plausible conceptions we can form of the ultimate nature of matter lead to the belief that even that is an event, or effect, a something derivative or caused. It is admitted that our conceptions of its ultimate nature are vague. As soon as we ask ourselves what it is, we begin to discover that it is in itself something utterly mysterious. Mr. Mill made it "a permanent possibility of sensations." Some philosophers hold that the causes of all material phenomena lie in the Divine will. But suppose the substratum of the universe to consist of a countless number of inconceivably small particles of matter, do we not by a single step reach the truth on which theism rests? These particles do not appear to owe their existence or a modification of their existence to the operation of the forces of nature. On the other hand they seem to bear the marks of manufactured articles (Clark Maxwell, in his address as President of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, 1870) and to preclude the idea of their being eternal and self-existent. The fitness of the atoms to be built up into the structure of this universe, is a proof of their having been made fit, and as natural forces could not have made them so, they must have been made so by the Creator. Every atom indeed seems to be full of the wisdom and power of God."

4. Our ablest physicists believe that a strictly scientific proof has been found of the view that the universe had a beginning in time.

(1) So Sir Wm. Thompson concluded from Fourier's Theory of Heat.

(2) Ethereal friction is stopping the motion of the heavenly bodies; they must fall together and constitute one mass. The fact that masses of the visible universe are moving separately is sufficient to assure us that the aggregation of masses has not been going on forever. Thus the very law of the correlation of energy to which Mill appealed proves when really tested that the visible universe is to have an end and has had a beginning.

(3) Geology also teaches that the present form of the universe is not eternal.

5. "As a matter of fact, all evolution theories as to the genesis of the universe necessarily postulate a commencement in time, and a primeval firemist. But this firemist cannot be the First Cause; because it is not eternal. If eternal it would be fully developed. If fully developed it could not develop into the universe. If immutable it could not pass into change.

3d. The conclusion seems to follow: The universe in its present form has a pre-existing and adequate cause, and its ultimate and absolute cause must be uncaused and unchangeable.

More seems to follow with very great probability: That even the matter of the universe was created.

4th. *The objections to the cosmological argument.*

1. It is objected: "It is impossible to show that the substance of the universe has had a beginning. The intellectual law of causality is a law for phenomena and not for entity."

We reply: The preceding discussion makes it exceedingly probable that the substance of the universe had a beginning. The molecule has been made and by no natural process.

2. It is objected: It is impossible to show that any other cause of the phenomena of the universe is required than a cause within itself, such as the Pantheist supposes.

We reply: The intuition of cause determines the relation of the Absolute to the world: and the idea of *causa sui* naturally and logically leads to the ascription of personality to the First Cause? This idea requires that will, the fountain-head of aboriginal activity, should be considered the prius of all existence? Moreover, if the Absolute be rational (as the logical *a priori* argument seems to show) and the cause of all things, and therefore will, the Absolute must be personal. (Muller, et al.)

However, the personality of the Absolute is made indubitably clear by the teleological argument.

3. It is objected: Granting that the universe must have a cause outside of itself, it is impossible to show that this cause has not itself been caused, i. e., consists of an infinite series of dependent causes. The principle of causality does not require that everything begun should be traced back to an uncaused cause. It demands that we assign a cause but not that we assign a first cause.

We reply: The principle of causality does in fact lead no man to the conclusion of an eternal succession of causes and effects. Some of those who posit the eternal series, suppose the First Cause to be matter, some of them suppose it to be mind.

It has indeed been well said that "A self-existent cause does not in itself come completely under the law of causality. That law cannot inform us what self-existence is. A self-existent cause, however, may be known as well as any other cause, by its effects. The principle of causality may lead up to it, although it does not include within itself the proof of the self-existence of the cause. It may at the last stage be attached to some other principle which couples the affirmation of the self-existence of the cause reached. If in the use of the principle of causality we come upon something which bears no marks of having been caused, no man can doubt that thing to be self-existent."

Another admission must be made by one who reflects on the principle of causality: *An uncaused cause, a first cause, alone answers truly to the idea of cause.*

We are warranted then in looking upon the universe as an event, an effect.

4. It is objected: Even if the cause of the universe has not itself been caused, it is impossible to show that this cause is not finite like the universe itself.

In reply to this it may be said: The cause of the universe must be in possession of a power far beyond the comprehension of our reasons or imaginations. It is unreasonable and presumptuous to deny that the power of its author may be infinite.

5th. *The value of the cosmological argument.*

It proves the existence of a cause of the universe indefinitely great. It makes it exceedingly probable that substance as well as phenomenon was brought into existence by that cause. It shows that this cause cannot consist in an infinite regressus of causes and effects.

It shows that the Absolute apprehended by intuition is the cause of the universe; and, along with the logical *a priori* argument, it makes probable the view that the Absolute is an absolute personal Spirit, Creator of the universe, Creator of substance.

CHAPTER III.

CORROBORATIVE EVIDENCE OF THE EXISTENCE OF GOD—CONTINUED

§VI. THE TELEOLOGICAL ARGUMENT, OR ARGUMENT FROM ORDER AND ADAPTATION.

The teleological argument is an argument from observed order and adaptation in the universe to design, or purpose in the cause of the universe. By order is meant the reign of law and the harmony resulting therefrom; and by adaptation is meant the useful collocation of parts for the achievement of certain ends. Order and adaptation may and do co-exist.

With these definitions before us, we may throw the argument from order and adaptation into the form of a syllogism as follows:

Major premise: Order and adaptation pervading a system respectively imply intelligence and purpose as the cause of that order and adaptation.

Minor premise: Order and adaptation pervade the universe as a whole and its parts.

Conclusion: Therefore the cause of the universe is a being of intelligence and purpose.

1st. The major premise is an intuitive conviction—a form of the law of causality. Every phenomenon—order and adaptation as well as any other—has its adequate cause. This conviction is not invalidated by the objections: 1. That order and adaptation may exist without being purposed. "For we are compelled to deny this in all cases where the order and adaptation pervade a system." 2. That order and adaptation result from the mere operation of physical forces and laws. "For these very forces and laws imply, instead of excluding, and originating and superintending intelligence and will. Flowered silk is after all not made by the loom but by the weaver."

2d. The minor premise expresses a working principle of all science, that all things have their uses, that order pervades the universe, and that the methods of nature are rational methods (Strong, Outlines of Theology, 25). Evidences of the truth of this principle abound. Order meets us everywhere in the universe. And the theist maintains that all relations of order are evidences of an intelligent cause.

"The physical universe has, perhaps, no more general characteristic than this—its laws are mathematical relations. The law of gravitation, which rules all masses of matter, is a definite numerical law. The curves which heavenly bodies describe under the influence of that law are the ellipse, circle, parabola, hyperbola—or, in other words, they all belong to the class of curves called conic sections, the properties of which mathematicians had begun to investigate nearly twenty centuries before Newton established that whatever was true of them, might be directly transferred to the heavens . . . The law of chemical combinations through which the whole world of matter has been built up out of the few elements, always admits of precise numerical expression. So does the law of the correlation of heat and gravitation. Each color of the rainbow is due to a certain number of vibrations in a certain time, etc. "It is only with the help of the mathematical sciences that the constitution of the material universe has been displayed, and its laws have been discovered, with that high measure of success of which physicists are so proud. But they could not have been applied to universe at all times unless its order had been of the exact numerical and geometrical kind which has been indicated; unless masses had attracted each other, and elements combined with each other in invariable proportions; unless the waters had been measured in the hollow of his hand, the heavens meted out with a span, the dust of the earth comprehended in a measure, and the mountains weighed in scales and the hills in a balance. Things have been thus weighed and measured. Could anything else than intelligence thus weigh, measure and number?

"The growth of astronmoical knowledge seems to have contributed greatly to bring about the transition from polytheism to monotheism, and so soon as the heavens were clearly understood to be the subject of law, and the countless bodies which circle in them not to be independent agents but parts or members of a single mechanical or organic system, the triumph of the latter was forever secured. No science has hitherto exerted so much influence on man's religious beliefs as astronomy; and it has been thus influential chiefly because through its whole history it has been a continuous, conspicuous, and ever advancing, ever expanding demonstration of the reign of law on the most magnificent scale. . . . Is it, I ask, to be held as evidence of the power of the human mind that it should have been able after many centuries of combined and continuous exertions to compute with approximate accuracy the paths and perturbations of planets which circle around the sun and the return of a few comets, but as no evidence even of the existence of mind, in the First Cause of things that the paths and perturbations of millions on millions of suns and planets and comets should have been determined with perfect precision for all the ages past and future of their existence, so that multitudinous as they are, each proceeds safely on its destined way, and all united form a 'harmony of structure and motion?'

"A much more recent science than astronomy, the science of chemistry, undertakes to instruct us as to the composition of the universe, and it is marvelous how much it can tell us even of the composi-

tion of the stars. What then is the most general and certain result? Just this, that order of the strictest kind, the most definite proportions, are wrought into the very structure of every world, and of every compound object of the world, air and water, earth and mineral, plant and animal. The vast variety of visible substances are reducible to rather more than sixty constituent elements, each of which has not only its own peculiar properties but its own definite and unvarying combining proportions with other elements, so that amidst the prodigious number of combinations all is strictly ordered and numerically exact."

"Can these elements be reasonably thought of as having been unfashioned and unprepared, or these processes as having been uninstituted and unpresided over by intelligence." (Cf. Flint, Theism 131-142.)

Evidences of the same general sort appear in the adaptations of the inanimate world to be the basis and support of life; in the typical forms and unity of plan apparent in inorganic creation, and in the principles which underlie and maintain human society.

"When we enter into an examination of organization itself, adjustment becomes still more obvious in the process of growth, reproduction, fructification, etc., in plants and animals, and in the provisions for locomotion, for securing food and shelter, for sight and hearing, etc., in the latter. The great physician, Sir Charles Bell, devoted a whole treatise to point out those which may be found in the hand alone. The arrangement of bones, muscles, joints and other parts in the limb of a tiger or the wing of an eagle are not less admirable. The eye and the ear are singularly exquisite structures, the former being the most perfect optical and the latter the most perfect of acoustic instruments."

"The complicated and refined adjustments of the body to the mind, and of the mind to the body, are so numerous and interesting that their study has now become the task of a special class of scientific men."

Order and adjustment do pervade the universe and our minor premise appears to be true. Nor is it invalidated by the objections: 1. That we frequently misunderstand the ends actually subserved by events and objects, for the principle is not that we know necessarily the actual end, but that we necessarily believe that there is some end in every case of order and adjustment. 2. That the order of the universe is manifestly imperfect; for this, if granted, would argue, "not absence of contrivance, but some special reason for imperfection, either limitation of the contriving intelligence itself, or in the nature of the end sought (as, for example), correspondence with the moral state and probation of sinners."

There is, then, everywhere, in physical and moral worlds, order and adaptation, proportion and combination, progress—order which advances to certain ends—which is, until realized, only an ideal. The question is, Is this state of things intelligible on any other supposition than that of a designing mind? The Theist holds that it is not.

A. A. Hodge puts well the argument for the minor premise, as follows: "It is evident that the very fact that science is possible is an indubitable proof that the order of nature is intellectual." (See outlines p. 36.) External nature is found perfectly correspondent to the law of the human mind. Mind must therefore have invested matter with its laws.

§VII. Objections to the Argument from Order and Adaptation Examined.

The only natural and adequate explanation of the order and adjustments of the universe is in the inference of an intelligent will-power to which they are due. Objections, however, are made to this inference.

1st. It is objected that this argument does not directly and of itself prove God to be the creator of the universe, but only the former of it. The objection has been made by Hume, Kant, J. S. Mill.

This objection amounts to no more than saying that the argument proves no more than it professes to prove. Moreover, the objectors before employing the objection should have ascertained that order and adjustment are superficial only, that they are separate from matter. Modern science seems to show that order and adjustment are as wonderful in the atom as in the starry heavens, and therefore inseparable.

Again, is it reasonable to believe that the former of the world is merely the former? If the former be not the creator of matter, then is matter eternal, and there are two eternals. But the law of parsimony of causes forbids our assuming for the explanation of anything more causes than are necessary to account for it.

2d. It is objected that the argument from order and adjustments does not prove the cause of them to be personal; that order and useful collocation of the universe may be only changing phenomena of an impersonal intelligence and will such as Pantheism supposes.

But the assumption of an unconscious intelligence producing these effects without the exercise of will is absurd; and intelligence and will consciously exercised means personality.

3d. It is objected that the argument from order and adjustments does not prove the divine intelligence to be infinite—that the universe as a system of order is finite and that we have no right to conclude that its cause in respect of intelligence, or in any other respect is infinite.

The answer is that the argument is not used to do more than it actually does. The infinity of the divine intelligence is not inferred from the order of the universe; but only an intelligence great enough to accomplish the result. He who grasps the inference properly made, apprehends a wisdom beyond his power to measure and which he can not deny to be infinite.

4th. It is argued that the evidences of God's using adjustments is a proof of His weakness. So J. S. Mill: "Who would have recourse to means, if His word were sufficient?"

To this it is replied: 1. Ability to contrive things is not weakness, nor inability to contrive them strength. Knowledge is power. If God wish to compass certain ends He must contrive means. 2. To speak of His will as able "to bestow the same efficacy on any means" is no less contrary to reason than it would be to speak of His will as able to make the part greater than the whole. A sunbeam cannot serve the same purpose as a granite pillar. 3. According to Mr. Mill infinite power could not create a finite world. Only a finite power could do this. 4. In a word, if God will not use means to ends He must be sole agent in the universe. He can accomplish nothing through rational agents.

5th. The argument from order and adaptation reduces God to be a great machinist.

In reply remark: 1. The universe is a machine, a work of God, but more than that. 2. The difference between the universe and a work of art or a machine should not be overlooked. The horse is different from the machine. 3. Man forms, God creates.

§VIII. Attempts to Account for Order and Adjustments in Nature by those who Refuse to Refer Them to a Designing Intelligence.

1st. Some have said that matter originates the order of the universe. But:

1. Grant this, the question arises: What is the origin of matter? There are strong reasons for believing that it had an origin as has already appeared. To say it originated with chance or necessity is plainly absurd, for chance and necessity are meaningless terms, unless mind and matter be presupposed. Without these there could be no phenomena and neither chance nor necessity. If a cause is to be sought for matter it must therefore be mind.

2. Besides, how could matter of itself produce order, even if it were self-existent and eternal. It is absurd to think that the atoms of themselves could produce this universe. Materialists, like Democritus and Epicuris, Diderot and Lange, hold that atoms produce the universe by fortuitous conjuction—a creed that requires for its acceptance titanic credulity.

2d. It is sometimes claimed by certain classes of scientists that the evidence for the existence of God, afforded by the order and adjustments of the universe, has been greatly weakened, if not wholly invalidated by the hypothesis of evolution.

The theories of evolution considered in their relation to theology may be classified as follows: 1. Those which neither deny nor obscure the evidences from order and adjustments to the existence of God and His immanence in and providential control over His works. 2. Those which while recognizing God as the original source from which all things have sprung, yet deny His immanence and constant providential

activity in His works. 3. Those which professedly or virtually obscure or deny the evidence in the order and adjustments of nature for the existence and activity of God as Creator and Providential Ruler.

We have no quarrel with the first class of evolution theories. So far as true they must be expressions of the way in which God has operated in the universe and are therefore welcome.

As to the second class, which assert that God started the universe, but deny that He is immanent in it, controlling its processes, observe: (1) That the point we are now endeavoring to establish is the existence of an intelligent, purposing first cause and not the mode of His relation to the universe. (2) In the judgment of many scientific men it is more in accord with the true interpretation of the scientific principle of continuity, to regard the First Cause as immanent in the universe and concurring with all unintelligent causes in all processes exhibiting power and intelligence. (3) The evidences afforded by man's moral consciousness and history and by revelation to the immanence and effective agency of God in all His works is unanswerable. See Hodge Outlines, pp. 38, 39.

As to the third class of evolution theories which obscure, or deny the evidence afforded by order and adjustments for the existence of an intelligent First Cause (Comte, Darwin, etc.), we observe:

1. Every such scheme, proposed to account for the existing universe, must furnish a probable explanation of all classes of facts. All purely natural theories of evolution fail to explain the following facts: (1) The origination of life. (2) The origin of sensation. (3) The origin of intelligence and will. (4) The origin of conscience. (5) The establishment of distinct, logically correlated and persistent types of genera and species maintained by the law of hybridity. (6) The origin of man.

2. Even if continuous evolution could be proved as a fact, the significance of evidence from order and adjustments would not be diminished in the least. It would establish the use of means which would require measureless intelligence in their ultimate cause: (1) The laws of abiogenesis, of reproduction, of sexual differentiation and reproduction, etc., etc., would have to be accounted for as well as the things produced through them. (2) Laws are never causes but expressions of order—results of delicately accurate adjustments which indicate the operation of divine wisdom—very complex effects to be accounted for. (3) All physical laws result from the original properties of matter acting under the mutual condition of certain complicated adjustments. Change the adjustments and the laws change. The laws which have carried on the evolutionary process must be referred back to the original adjustments of the material elements of the firemist. These adjustments in which all future order and life is, by hypothesis, latent, must have been caused by *chance* or *intelligence*. Which? Huxley on? See Criticisms on Origin of Species, 350.

The modern scientific explanation of the process of the universe by physical causes alone differs from the old long-exploded chance theory, only by accidents: (a) the juggling use of the words "laws of nature"; (b) and the assumption that chance operating through indefinite duration can accomplish the work of intelligence.

(4) In artificial breeding man selects. In "natural selection" nature selects. Hence nature must be intelligently directed either by (a) immanent intelligence in her elements, or in her whole organized body; or (b) by the original adjustment of her machinery by an intelligent Creator (A. A. Hodge, Outlines, 41).

Evolution or no evolution, the argument from order and adjustment is valid.

The necessary ground intuitively perceived, proved by the cosmological argument to be the cause of the universe, is shown by the teleological argument to be an intelligent personal agent.

CHAPTER IV.

CORROBORATIVE EVIDENCES OF GOD'S EXISTENCE, CONTINUED

§IX. THE ANTHROPOLOGICAL EVIDENCES.

This is an argument from man's mental and moral state to the existence of a Creator, Lawgiver and End. It is sometimes called the moral argument but that title is too narrow, having refernce only to the conscience in man, whereas the argument we have in hand proceeds from man's intellectual, self-active and moral nature.

This argument may be presented conveniently in three divisions:

1st. Man's intellectual and moral nature must have had for its author an intellectual and moral being. The elements of proof are as follows:

1. Man, an intellectual and moral being, has had a beginning. Geology shows that man has not always existed.

2. Material and unconscious forces do not afford a sufficient cause for man's reason, conscience, and free will.

3. Man as an effect can be referred only to a cause possessing personality—self-consciousness, self-determination and a moral nature.

2d. Man's moral nature proves the existence of a holy Lawgiver and Judge. The elements of the proof are:

1. Conscience recognizes the existence of a moral law which has supreme authority. Many authors have been ready to stake the existence of God on this argument alone, e. g., Kant, Sir Wm. Hamilton.

With better balance, Flint says that God can be recognized as a proper object of worship only through the glass of conscience.

By conscience is meant that faculty of the soul with which we apprehend that which is good and bad in actions. Conscience recognizes the existence of a law which has supreme authority. This moral law, since it is not self-imposed, argues the existence of a holy will which has imposed the law.

"Some say that the law of conscience is set by man's own will, and that that will is a law unto itself; but this assertion cannot bear examination. The will apart from reason and conscience is a mere force, it is not true will. It has a rational law only through its connection with reason, a moral law only through its connection with conscience. Whoever affrms that the will is its own law must grossly abuse language, and signify by the term will what others mean by reason and will, conscience and will.

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He must do worse than this, bad as it is. He must contradict the plain teachings of his own conscience. The will and its law are distinctly felt to be not one but two. The will is clearly realized in our moral experience as not legislative, as not giving itself a law but as being under a law, the law which conscience apprehends." "Conscience claims to rule my will in virtue of a law which cannot be the expression of my will, and which cannot be anything else than the expression of another will; one often in antagonism to mine."

Whose is this will which we feel to be obligatory? Whose, if not God's?

"Conscience reveals a purpose as well as declares a law. Its very existence is a proof of purpose. The eye is not more certainly given us that we may see than the conscience is given us that we may use all our powers in a righteous and beneficent manner. Is it conceivable that any other than a righteous God would have bestowed upon us such a faculty?" The purpose which conscience reveals is certainly not our own purpose, just as the law which it reveals is not the law of our own will. Our own purpose and the purpose revealed in conscience are often in antagonism.

Known violations of the moral law are followed by feelings of ill desert. This argues a person who has imposed the law. Thus only can be explained the greatness of the consciousness of guilt and the fear of retribution.

"This argument from conscience rests on the general and distinctive characteristic of our moral nature; not on the truth of particular judgments or the purity of particular affections."

It may be asked whether the testimony which conscience gives to the existence of God and His holy character is confirmed when we look out into the moral world. In answer it must be said: There is a vast amount of prosperous sin in the world, and a vast amount of suffering virtue. Nevertheless the candid mind must see that on the whole vice is punished and virtue is rewarded and that the author of the world seems to be righteous. "He that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption," is found by experience to be a law always in active operation. Righteousness is found to exalt both individuals and nations.

3d. Man's emotional and voluntary nature proves the existence of a being who can furnish in himself a satisfactory object of human affection, and an end which will call forth man's highest activities and ensures his highest progress (Strong).

Only a holy person of measureless attributes could meet this demand of the human soul. Such a being must exist. Otherwise belief in a lie would be more productive of virtue than belief in the truth.

The defects of the Anthorpological Argument are: 1. It cannot of itself prove a creator of the universe. 2. It cannot itself prove the

infinity of God, since man from whom we argue is finite. 3. It cannot prove the mercy of God.

But it is not used to do any of these things. It is needed and used to supplement the other arguments. Those who, like Herbert Spencer, recognize an Infinite and Absolute Being, Power and Cause, may yet fail to recognize this being as spiritual and personal, simply because they do not recognize themselves as spiritual and personal beings; that is, do not recognize reason, conscience, and free will in man. Agnosticism in philosophy involves agnosticism in religion.

"*The value of this argument* is that it assures us of the existence of a person Being, who rules us in righteousness and who is the proper object of supreme affection and service."

No mean place should be given this line of argument for God's existence. As the cosmological argument showed that the ground of all dependent things, apprehended by intuition, was the cause of the universe; as the teleological argument showed that that ground was intelligent, self-active, personal, so the anthropological shows that that ground is a holy personality.

CHAPTER V.

OBJECTIONS TO THE DIVINE WISDOM AND BENEVOLENCE AND RIGHTEOUSNESS

Many of these objections are easily met and need no specific consideration. We shall consider one objection only against each of these several attributes. 1st. Comte, following Laplace, has argued that there is no evidence of intelligence or design in the solar system, because its elements and members are not disposed in the most advantageous manner. The moon, in particular, should have been so placed that it would go round the earth in the same time that the earth revolves around the sun. Storms, earthquakes, the polar regions, etc., etc., are not such as wisdom would have designed.

But such criticisms can have no great value. 1. Because there may be abundant evidence of intelligence where there is not evidence of perfect intelligence. The question, Did the solar system originate with intelligence? is not the question, Did the solar system originate with perfect intelligence? The questions should be kept separate.

2. Because we are very incompetent critics of a system so vast as the universe. We cannot comprehend any considerable part of it, or the end to which it as a whole tends. Comte and Laplace forgot many uses of the moon. Their proposed arrangement would have been, scientific men say, vastly less satisfactory.

Organic nature has been still more sharply criticized than the inorganic. Some organs, e. g., the spleen, has no known use. Some organs are imperfectly developed. Some of the most elaborately developed organs are said to have defects, e. g., the eye. Abortions and monsters are said to be frequent.

In reply it is to be said: 1. An organ is not to be pronounced useless simply because its use is not known. 2. Rudimentary and obsolete organs indicate an order which comprehends and conditions the law of use and contrivance for use, and gives keys for the understanding of the Divine plan. 3. Theism can have little to fear from the fact that all human eyes are limited in their range and finite in their perfections, or that many persons have bad eyesight. The eye is incomparably superior to every other optical instrument. 4. Abortions and monsters are at least exceptions. This could not be true if Huxley's teaching concerning nature's procedure were true. In such a case the bullets that miss would be the more numerous. There are no monsters in nature in the sense in which Empedocles imagined. A monster is really only a being to which an accident occurred while in the womb. Who can say that God did not provide for the accidents?

2nd. It is objected that the suffering in the world conflicts with the goodness of God.

It is conceded that there is mystery in mere pain, in the pain that was on earth before man appeared and sinned. The suffering of animals is more mysterious than the suffering of man, because so much of man's suffering can be traced to sin. But every animal is made subject to suffering. How can all this be under the reign of infinite goodness?

To answer this question, even in part, we must study the relevant facts, the actual effects, and natural tendencies of suffering.

1. Of the relevant facts: (1) One of the most manifest is that pain serves to warn animals against what would injure or destroy them. It has a preservative use. Probably if there were no pain life would cease on such a place as this earth. So far as pain is preservative of life, it argues the goodness of God. (2) Pain is a stimulus to exertion and thus to development of all the faculties—has a good end. The pain that excites development tends to pleasure of the sort that comes of noble endeavor. It is of incalculable benefit to discipline the human spirit. And when we remark how no man liveth to himself and no man dieth to himself, we may well raise the question whether suffering, even death, is not a mark of God's benevolence? Thus pain and death do not have the character to be expected of works of a malevolent being.

3rd. It is objected that sin in the world conflicts with the righteousness of God.

The existence of moral evil is a painful mystery. Physical evil may be a relative good, which God can easily be conceived of as causing and approving. Moral evil is an unconditional evil and cannot be the work of any morally perfect being.

There is no reason for supposing that God causes or approves of sin. All sin known to us has been willed by creatures.

"Sin is not God's work. Moral order may exist without moral disorder, but moral disorder can exist only as rebellion against moral order." Sin is something which has been struck out by a creature in the exercise of his own will—a faculty originally good—by the misuse of that faculty. The misuse was self-prompted. For this God is not to be blamed. Thus God's character is not stained by the sins His creatures have committed.

If questioned why God has not made only moral creatures who would be certain always to choose the right, we can say, without shame, we do not know.

We can, however, say that the permission of sin has been made subservient to the attainment of certain great ends: 1. To develop a very high kind of virtue in human beings. 2. To develop the Christian scheme of salvation. 3. To display the divine character as shown by nothing else in the history of the universe known to man.